

INTRODUCTION

The *Public Library Trustee Reference Manual* provides an in-depth discussion of the major issues, laws, and responsibilities that library trustees will need to know about as they guide their libraries. It builds on, incorporates, and updates the content of the *Public Library Trustee Manual* published in 1989.

This *Manual* is written primarily for governing library boards of trustees and library directors, but it also may be useful to advisory library boards, Friends of Library groups, and other library supporters.

The *Reference Manual* is designed to:

- Give in-depth information about critical issues facing library trustees.
- Provide guidance on carrying out the complex responsibilities of a board member.
- Show examples of best practices.
- Supply additional resources, especially Internet Websites, for further consultation.

This *Reference Manual* is a companion volume to the *Public Library Trustee Summary Manual* that offers a broad basic understanding of the duties and responsibilities of trustees. The *Reference Manual* provides significantly more information, details, and resources than the *Summary Manual*. Many of the *Reference Manual* sections are written by recognized experts in library issues, governance, and management—both library trustees and librarians. Please note, however, that the *Manual* should not be used as a source for legal advice. Trustees should always contact legal counsel for advice.

The three-ring binder format of the *Manual* was selected so the State Library, trustees, and librarians may add updates as well as create a complete reference resource in one notebook by incorporating other materials such as the board bylaws, strategic plans, and policies.